

**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 10 to 17 are all the claims pending in the application, prior to the present Amendment.

In the present Amendment, since the Amendment of June 4, 2009 was not entered, applicants have amended the claims based on the claims as they appeared in the Amendment of January 7, 2009.

Claim 12 has been amended to correct a typographical error so that it now recites the range set forth in original claim 12.

Claim 5 has been rejected under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112 as indefinite.

The Examiner states that the boiling point is dependent on the pressure, and that claim 5 does not recite the boiling point.

In response, applicants point out that the boiling point specified in claim 5 is determined under normal pressure, namely, under air pressure of 1 atm, which is a common sense among chemical engineers when there is no specific description, especially as to pressure. Applicants have amended claim 5 to recite an air pressure of 1 atm.

In view of the above, applicants request withdrawal of the rejection under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112.

Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10 to 12 and 15 to 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. 2003/0100675 to Goetz et al.

Applicants submit that Goetz et al do not disclose the subject matter of the present claims and, accordingly, request withdrawal of this rejection.

The present invention as set forth in claim 1 as amended above is directed to a molded article, comprising an acrylic block copolymer (A) which comprises a methacrylic polymer block (a) and an acrylic polymer block (b), wherein at least one of polymer blocks among the methacrylic polymer block (a) and the acrylic polymer block (b) has a functional group (X), and a compound (B) containing at least 1.1 or more of functional groups (Y) in one molecule. The number average molecular weight of the acrylic block copolymer (A) measured by gel permeation chromatography is 30,000 to 200,000. The functional group (X) is at least one kind of functional groups selected from an acid anhydride group, a carboxyl group, a hydroxyl group and an epoxy group. The compound (B) is a polymer having a weight average molecular weight of 50,000 or less. The functional group (Y) is at least one kind of functional groups selected from an epoxy group, a carboxyl group, a hydroxyl group, an amino group, an acid anhydride group and an oxazoline group. The functional group (Y) is a functional group having reactivity with the functional group (X). The functional group (X) and the functional group (Y) are reacted at molding and the acrylic block copolymer (A) is crosslinked.

Thus, applicants have amended claim 1 to direct it to a molded article. Support for this amendment can be found in original claim 16. Applicants have made a similar amendment to claims 4, 5, 7, 8 and 10 to 14. Claim 15 has been canceled.

Further, as can be seen from the above, applicants have amended claim 1 to recite the technical feature that "the functional group (X) and the functional group (Y) are reacted at

molding and the acrylic block copolymer (A) is crosslinked." Support for this amendment can be found at page 47, lines 4 to 10 of the present specification. Still further, applicants have amended claim 1 to refer to a carboxyl group for functional groups (X) and (Y), as recited in original claims 2 and 3.

Goetz et al disclose a flow control agent for a curable powder coating composition. See paragraph [0001] of Goetz et al. The thermosetting coating composition of Goetz et al may be in the form of liquid coating compositions, examples of which include aqueous and solvent-based coating compositions and electrodepositable coating compositions. See paragraph [0114] of Goetz et al.

In the working Examples of Goetz et al, epoxy-acid powder clear coating compositions were electrostatically sprayed onto test panels and evaluated for coating properties. See paragraph [0160]. A coating composition and a flow control agent therein largely differ from a molded article, such as a powder slush molded article, in various points, such as, use, required properties and performance. Thus, the invention of Goetz et al is entirely different from the present invention relating to a molded article.

Goetz et al do not disclose any molded article that improves moldability, heat resistance, weather resistance, chemical resistance, adhesivity, flexibility and abrasion resistance. The object of Goetz et al is to improve coating appearance and minimal cratering at lower film thickness. See paragraph [0016]. In addition, there is no disclosure in Goetz et al regarding powder slush molding. Therefore, the inventions as claimed in the presently amended claims are not anticipated by Goetz et al.

The Examiner states in the Advisory Action that "Goetz use UBE nylon," and then cites Fukushi et al for a disclosure of a molecular weight of such a material. However, contrary to the Examiner's statement, Goetz et al do not described that UBE nylon is used. Thus, the disclosure of Fukushi et al is not relevant.

The Examiner states in the Office Action that "(t)he reference discloses thermosetting coating composition (abstract) containing epoxy functional copolymers and methacrylic block copolymers containing (carboxyl generating) TBMA units". However, the block copolymer of Goetz et al is a flow control agent, as disclosed, for example, in the Goetz et al ABSTRACT, which is not reacted with other components in consideration of its functions.

Further, Goetz et al do not disclose that a block copolymer has a functional group such as an acid anhydride group, a carboxyl group, a hydroxyl group and an epoxy group.

Regarding introduction of a carboxyl group into an acrylic block copolymer, the present specification discloses a direct introduction by polymerization and introduction of the carboxyl group by converting a functional group. See page 17, lines 20 to 26 of the present specification.

Goetz et al do not disclose any introduction method of a carboxyl group into the block copolymer, such as that a carboxyl group is introduced into the block copolymer by converting a functional group. Thus, even though TBMA (IBMA-isobutylmethacrylate) is used as a monomer for the acrylic block copolymer of the Examples of Goetz et al, the block copolymer of Goetz et al is inherently different from an acrylic block copolymer (A) of the present invention in that there is no carboxyl group and that it does not react with a GMA functional acrylic resin.

Therefore, the present invention is not anticipated by Goetz et al.

In view of the above, applicants submit that Goetz et al do not disclose the subject matter of the present claims and, accordingly, request withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 10 to 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as WP 02/081561 to Tsujii et al, corresponding to U.S. 2004/0106732 A1 to Tsuji et al.

Applicants submit that Tsuji et al do not disclose the subject matter of the present claims and, accordingly, request withdrawal of this rejection.

In the Office Action, the Examiner refers to paragraphs [0277], [0371] and [0282] of Tsuji et al '732. However, the highest numbered paragraph in Tsuji et al '732 is paragraph [0238].

Accordingly, it is not clear what portions of US '732 to Tsuji et al are being relied upon by the Examiner.

In any event, Tsuji et al do not disclose that a functional group of an acrylic block copolymer and a functional group of a polymer having a weight average molecular weight of 50,000 or less are crosslinked.

Therefore, the present invention is not anticipated by Tsuji et al.

In view of the above, applicants submit that Tsuji et al do not disclose the subject matter of the present claims and, accordingly, request withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 1, 5, 7, 8, and 10 to 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by WO 02/092696 to "Kaneda et al." corresponding to U.S. 2004/0147674 to "Kakeda et al."

Applicants submit that WO 02/092696 does not disclose the subject matter of the present claims and, accordingly, request withdrawal of this rejection.

WO 02/092696 does not disclose that a functional group of an acrylic block copolymer and a functional group of a polymer having a weight average molecular weight of 50,000 or less are crosslinked, and that according to the above crosslinking, there is obtained a molded article having improved melt flowability at molding and being excellent in heat resistance.

Therefore, the present invention is not anticipated by WO 02/092696.

In view of the above, applicants submit that WO 02/092696 does not disclose the subject matter of the present claims and, accordingly, request withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 10 to 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by JP 2002-60449 to Kaneda et al.

Applicants submit that JP 2002-60449 does not disclose the subject matter of the present claims and, accordingly, request withdrawal of this rejection.

In the Office Action, the Examiner refers to paragraphs [0012] and [0013] of JP 2002-60449 for a disclosure of a molecular weight of 30,000 to 500,000.

A molecular weight of 30,000 to 500,000 is not described at paragraphs [0012] and [0013] to JP 2002-60449, but is described in claim 12 of JP 2002-60449.

However, the molecular weight described in claim 12 of JP 2002-60449 relates to an acrylic block copolymer corresponding to the acrylic block copolymer (A) of the present invention. Thus, the technical feature of claim 1 that "the compound (B) is a polymer having a weight average molecular weight of 50,000 or less" is not disclosed in JP 2002-60449.

In addition, JP 2002-60449 does not disclose that a functional group of an acrylic block copolymer and a functional group of a polymer having a weight average molecular weight of 50,000 or less are crosslinked.

Therefore, the present invention is not anticipated by JP 2002-60449.

In view of the above, applicants submit that JP 2002-60449 does not disclose the subject matter of the present claims and, accordingly, request withdrawal of this rejection.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

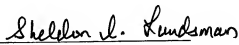
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